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ABSTRACT

Designed as a simple how-to guide, this handbook presents guidelines for setting up a church or synagogue library or revitalizing an existing one. The first of 10 sections, "Begin with a Purpose," advocates thinking about the goals of the library and putting them in writing. It includes two brief sample mission statements. The second, "Establish Objectives," gives advice about summarizing broad objectives and identifying specific objectives. A list of 11 basic manuals about congregational libraries is included. The third, "Obtain Approval," suggests ways to rally support from influential individuals or officers of the church or synagogue, survey user needs, and request formal approval. The fourth, "Set Up a Library Committee," provides guidelines for appointing a chairperson, recruiting committee members, and assembling meetings. The fifth, "Survey Your Assets," recommends gathering up already existing resource materials, sorting them, and finding a place to store them. The sixth, "Develop Program Plans," provides specific suggestions for planning programs to meet the library's objectives. The seventh, "Carry Out Specific Projects," lists steps for implementing programs. The eighth, "Arrange for Continuing Education," suggests ways to orient and train volunteers to work in the library. The ninth, "Provide for Continuity," recommends that an annual report and yearly program plans be prepared and presented to the library's sponsors. The final section, "Stretch Your Horizons," advises community outreach, learning from professional librarians, and staying optimistic. (SD)

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SETTING UP A LIBRARY

How to Begin or Begin Again

Ruth S. Smith

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The CHURCH AND SYNAGOGUE LIBRARY ASSOCIATION was formed in 1967 to provide educational guidance in the establishment and maintenance of congregational library service.

The organization issues publications relating to this branch of librarianship, including *Church and Synagogue Libraries,* a bi-monthly bulletin containing news and informative articles for members and subscribers.

Membership in the non-profit association is open to all who are interested in church or synagogue libraries. Provision is made for membership in the name of an individual, church or synagogue, or institution. There are also affiliated, contributing, and honorary membership categories.

For a brochure with further information, and a sample copy of the official bulletin, write CSLA at Post Office Box 1130, Bryn Mawr, PA 19010.

SETTING UP A LIBRARY

How to Begin
or Begin Again

Ruth S. Smith

CSLA Guide No. 1

CHURCH AND SYNAGOGUE LIBRARY ASSOCIATION
P.O. Box 1130, Bryn Mawr, PA 19010

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Ruth S. Smith is a member of the Library Committee, Bethesda United Methodist Church, Bethesda, MD, and formerly church librarian. She is a founder of the Church Library Council (Washington, DC, area) and first President of the Church and Synagogue Library Association. She is author of *Workshop Planning* (CSLA Guide No. 3, Rev. ed., 1979), *Promotion Planning All Year 'Round* (co-author with Claudia Hannaford) CSLA Guide No. 2, Rev. 2nd ed., 1978, *Getting the Books Off the Shelves* (Seabury Press, in cooperation with CSLA, 1975), *Cataloging Books Step by Step* (CSLA Guide No. 5, 1977) and *Cataloging Made Easy* (Seabury Press, in cooperation with CSLA, 1978).

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PREFACE

More than twenty years ago, when we first started our church library at Bethesda United Methodist Church (Bethesda, MD), there were no guidelines or road signs to tell us just how to go about it. We wrote for the church library manual issued by our denomination, which described a typical library and how to process materials. However, it did not tell us what a big jump it was from the first idea of having a library to providing full fledged library services. Even though I was trained as a librarian, I had to learn by experience the best ways to approach the obtaining of support, planning of services, and achieving a successful library operation for a congregation.

Recently, the need for a simple "how to" guide for beginning a library or revitalizing an existing one emerged again. Three friends, each with varying degrees of previous library experience, asked me for advice on how to begin a parish library for adults, how to start a synagogue library collection, and where to begin with a library that had slowly been going down hill from lack of attention. All three had no previous experience with congregational libraries and were looking for help.

This step by step guide is for my three friends and for all others – with or without previous library experience – who wish to build a solid foundation on which to create successful library services for their own congregation.

SETTING UP A LIBRARY

To begin, or to begin again . . . to set up a new library, or to revitalize an old one . . . this step by step procedure provides a plan of action based on the successful experience of other library directors and librarians.

STEP 1: BEGIN WITH A PURPOSE (The Concept)

1. THINK ABOUT YOUR GOALS.
Why have a library service?
For whom is the library intended?
How will it benefit the church/synagogue?
How will it benefit individuals?
What will be our relationship to the larger community?

2. PUT IT IN WRITING. The concept should be broad enough to encompass all you hope to achieve but not limited by saying yet just how it will be done. Two examples follow:

Church

The purpose of the _____ library is to support the mission of the church, to undergird its teaching, preaching, and evangelistic efforts, and to help individuals develop an understanding of the faith and their full potential as children of God and workers in his kingdom.

Synagogue

The Temple Library was established to provide a well-rounded collection of resources on Judaism and the Jewish way of life for the adult members of the congregation.

STEP 2: ESTABLISH OBJECTIVES
(The Proposal)

1. **CONSIDER HOW** the goals will be achieved.
   What will be done? By whom?
   What are the scope and limitations?
   What kinds of materials and services?

2. **SUMMARIZE BROAD OBJECTIVES.** Some libraries like to include this as an extension of the purpose statement. An Example follows:

   . . . by providing library services, such as multimedia resource materials for the entire congregation (children, youth and adults) as well as the broader neighborhood community, within limits established by the Library Committee.

3. **IDENTIFY SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES,** preferably in the order of their importance, or priority. Specific objectives are action-oriented. They always describe an action to be taken. An example follows:

   • Organize a library committee which will guide the development of the library and establish policies for operation. The Chairman will be appointed by and report to the Council on Ministries.

   • Establish the scope of services to be offered.

   • Select a librarian who will recruit a volunteer staff, as needed. The Librarian will be appointed by and report to the Chairman of the Library Committee.

   • Obtain support in the way of funding.

   • Locate, furnish and equip the library.

   • Develop the collection of materials and organize it for use.

   • Provide library and information services, such as staffing each Sunday, preparing reading lists, etc.

   • Establish a training program for the staff.

   • Promote use of the library, its materials and services.

4. **OBTAIN SOME OF THESE "HOW TO" MANUALS:**
   You will want to buy one or more of the following basic manuals for congregational libraries:

Church Media Center Training Guides by Jacqulyn Anderson. Broadman Press, 1978: "How to Administer and Promote a Church Media Center," $4.00; "How to Process Media," $3.50; and "How to Classify, Catalog and Maintain Media," $4.25. Helpful guides from the Church Library Department of the Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention.

THE CHURCH RESOURCE LIBRARY: HOW TO START IT AND MAKE IT GROW, by Maryann J. Dotts. Abingdon Press, 1976. $2.95.
Excellent handbook on the establishment and development of the church library as a resource center. Simplified Dewey schedule and subject headings.

THE CHURCH LIBRARY: TIPS AND TOOLS, by Gladys Scheer. Bethany Press, 1973. $2.50.
Specific "how-to" ideas and suggestions for starting and operating a church library. Appendices include a listing of library supplies and equipment companies and a list of denominational services to libraries..

GUIDE FOR THE ORGANIZATION AND OPERATION OF A RELIGIOUS RESOURCE CENTER, by John Corrigan. Catholic Library Association, 1977. $2.50. How to start and develop a resource center for all types of print and nonprint media.

THE KEY TO A SUCCESSFUL CHURCH LIBRARY. Revised edition. Augsburg Publishing Company, 1967. $1.95.
Excellent manual on procedures in starting and operating a church library. Includes the author's own classification scheme.

THE LIBRARY AND RESOURCE CENTER IN CHRISTIAN EDUCATION, by Betty McMichael. Moody Press, 1977. $8.95.
A complete manual on planning, starting, organizing and operating a church library.

SELECTING LIBRARY MATERIALS, by Arthur W. Swarthout. CSLA Guide 4. Revised edition. Church and Synagogue Library Association, 1978. $2.50.
An outline guide to the selection and acquisition of congregational library materials with specific suggestions of review sources and publishers.

CATALOGING MADE EASY: HOW TO ORGANIZE YOUR CONGREGATION'S LIBRARY, by Ruth S. Smith. Seabury Press, 1978. $4.95.
How to organize books and all types of resource materials and catalog them for easy use by the congregation.

CATALOGING BOOKS STEP BY STEP, by Ruth S. Smith. CSLA Guide 5. Church and Synagogue Library Association, 1977. $2.50.
Step-by-step directions for processing books "from box to bookshelf".

CLASSIFYING CHURCH OR SYNAGOGUE LIBRARY MATERIALS. CSLA Guide 7. Church and Synagogue Library Association, 1977. $2.50.
An explanation of the purposes and procedures of classification with a list of Dewey numbers most likely to be used in a congregational library.

SUBJECT HEADINGS FOR CHURCH OR SYNAGOGUE LIBRARIES, by Dorothy B. Kersten. CSLA Guide 8. Church and Synagogue Library Association, 1978. $3.50.
An explanation of the principles of subject cataloging, with a list of the subject headings most likely to be used in a congregational library. Suggested Dewey numbers are included.

STEP 3: OBTAIN APPROVAL
(The Acceptance)

1. ROUND UP SUPPORT. Talk with the minister/rabbi to make sure he approves the idea of a congregational library. If necessary, talk with other influential individuals or officers of the church/synagogue to get their support. Be enthusiastic.

2. SURVEY THE USER NEEDS. Find out what the congregation wants in the way of library services. Interview individuals or distribute a questionnaire to (1) chairmen of the major work areas, (2) leaders of specific programs, such as the women's groups, the prayer group, the choir, the day school, the Scouts, the youth group, etc., and possibly (3) the entire congregation. When you find out what the congregation wants, plan to provide it (so they will use the library), and include it in your list of objectives.

3. REQUEST FORMAL APPROVAL. Present your goals and objectives to the governing body of the church/synagogue or the board responsible for education. Get official approval to establish a library. If additional information is requested (which you might not have), such as costs, ask only for approval of the idea so a library committee can be organized. The library committee will be responsible for recommending a time-phased plan based on levels of funding for programs that will meet the objectives.

STEP 4: SET UP A LIBRARY COMMITTEE
(The Organization)

1. APPOINT A CHAIRMAN. Contact the chairman of the official group to which the library committee will report. Request that a chairman be appointed to head up a library committee. If necessary, arrange to be on the agenda for the next meeting, talk about the goals and objectives and use flip charts, handouts, etc. if this would help. Explain the responsibilities of the library committee. Discuss how this library differs from the public library.

2. RECRUIT LIBRARY COMMITTEE MEMBERS. Meet with the chairmen of the various work areas and major groups. Ask each to appoint a representative to serve on the library committee. You might need to use the same presentation prepared for the above. Then, invite also a few other knowledgeable persons from the congregation at large to serve on the committee. Look for influential individuals in the congregation, persons who love books and read a lot, and individuals who have had previous experience working in a library. Look for persons with creative ability. A variety of talents will be needed to carry out all the objectives.

3. ASSEMBLE THE LIBRARY COMMITTEE. Set the date, time and place for a first meeting. Notify all the members. Prepare a tentative agenda in advance. Discuss the responsibilities of the committee and get them started on laying out a plan of action.

Note: All of the remaining steps are meant for the Library Committee.

STEP 5: SURVEY YOUR ASSETS
(The Preparation)

1. GATHER UP RESOURCE MATERIALS that the church/synagogue already owns. More than likely books, pamphlets, pictures, filmstrips, records, etc. have been purchased for various programs over a period of years. Look for these materials in classroom closets or lying about in the meeting rooms.

2. SORT THE MATERIALS and save all items that are still in good usable condition. This will be the beginning of your library collection.

3. STORE THE COLLECTION TEMPORARILY. After the library committee has established the selection policy, found a suitable location, and provided shelving, the collection will be evaluated again. Materials which satisfy the selection guidelines will be cataloged for use.

STEP 6: DEVELOP PROGRAM PLANS
(The Application)

1. ANALYZE INFORMATION REQUIREMENTS of the congregation. Determine what is really wanted and needed in the way of library services.

2. REVIEW THE OBJECTIVES. (See step 2) Amend these, if necessary.

3. LIST SPECIFIC PROGRAMS under each of the objectives. In doing so, be sure to consider the following:

Financing
Location and room
Equipment
Staff and training
Policies (for accepting gifts, etc.)
Materials selection and ordering
Materials processing and maintenance
Special services
Library promotion

4. ARRANGE THE PROGRAMS IN PRIORITY ORDER UNDER EACH OF THE OBJECTIVES. Example:

OBJECTIVE 1 (first priority): Establish the scope/ limitations of library services.

- **Program a:** (first priority): Determine who will be served during the coming year (the short-term) and ultimately (the long-term).
- **Program b:** Determine the kinds of services that will be provided (short and long-term).
- **Program c:** Determine the types of materials that will be furnished (short and long-term).

OBJECTIVE 2 (second priority): Establish policies for operation.

- **Program a:** Decide on a policy for selection of materials. Put it in writing.
- **Program b:** Decide on the policy for accepting or rejecting gifts.
- **Program c:** Determine hours and rules for using the library.

OBJECTIVE 3 (third priority): Obtain support in the way of funding and/or gifts.

- **Program a:** Ask for gifts and donations.
- **Program b:** Request budget funds from the group to which the Library Committee reports.
- **Program c:** Request budget funds from other potential sources of support, such as the women's society, the day school, etc.
- **Program d:** If it is the policy of your church/ synagogue to hold fund-raising events, plan to hold some for the benefit of your library.

OBJECTIVE 4 (fourth priority): Select a librarian.

- **Program a:** Write a job description for the librarian.
- **Program b:** Interview potential candidates.
- **Program c:** Make the appointment.

OBJECTIVE 5 (fifth priority): Locate, furnish and equip the library.

- **Program a:** Find a location for the library that will be convenient for the potential users—preferably on the main level and along a well travelled corridor.
- **Program b:** Arrange for the use of a room that will be easy to enter and large enough for all the materials and services you plan to offer.
- **Program c:** Draw up floor plans to show possible layouts of furniture and equipment. Identify that which is essential for the first year of operation. Plan adequate lighting.
- **Program d:** Recommend a time-phased procurement plan. Have at least three levels of funding from which to choose, based on how much of the total plan might be ordered at one time. If you cannot afford to get everything at once, this helps to identify what to purchase the first year.

(Additional programs will cover ordering, receiving and installing the furniture and equipment. Some congregations purchase standard library furniture from established library supply houses. Others prefer to build their own. There are advantages to each.)

5. LIST SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES under each of the above projected programs. Example:

Program: Order and receive materials.
Activity 1: Prepare orders (forms or letters), send and file copies in pending order file.
Activity 2: Receive material, check against invoice(s), and pull suspense copy(s) of order.
Activity 3: Return errors for credit.

6. IDENTIFY LEVELS OF POSSIBLE ACTIVITY for the coming year and the cost of each. Example: (not a complete list of supplies needed).

Activity 1: Prepare orders, etc.

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
10 books/$50	25 books/$125	50 books/$250
2 filmstrips/$14	6 filmstrips/$42	10 filmstrips/$70
1 pad forms/$2	1 pad forms/$2	1 pad forms/$2
postage/$1	postage/$2	postage/$3
Total cost $67	Total cost $171	Total cost $325

Activity 2: Receive materials (no cost).

Activity 3: Return errors for credit.

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
postage/$1	postage/$1.50	postage/$2

7. CIRCLE the total cost of the level recommended for the coming year. Example:

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Activity 1:	$67	(circled) $171	$325
Activity 2:	$0	$0	$0
Activity 3:	(circled) $1	$1.50	$2

8. ADD UP ALL THE CIRCLED AMOUNTS, to estimate costs for the coming year. If this total is more than you anticipated in income, go back and place the circles around a lower level of effort or hold back lesser priority programs for another year.

Example: $171.00
1.00
Total: $172.00

STEP 7: CARRY OUT SPECIFIC PROJECTS (The Implementation)

1. ASSIGN RESPONSIBILITIES. With program plans outlined as noted above, specific project can easily be assigned to individuals on the library committee and staff.

2. WRITE PROCEDURES for the activities that will be repetitive, such as ordering materials, cataloging, circulating, etc. An example of a procedures manual is *Cataloging Books Step By Step* (Bryn Mawr, PA, Church and Synagogue Library Association, 1977). Begin now to keep a procedures manual or desk book for use of future librarians as well as for review. A CSLA Guide to help in the preparation of such a manual is to be published as CSLA Guide No. 9.

3. ESTABLISH A WORK SCHEDULE. Some libraries set aside a specific morning of the week when the staff assembles to do work necessary to maintain the collection. Even if much of the work is done at other times, it is good to get the staff together regularly to compare notes. The staff needs to work as a team.

4. KEEP RECORDS. Keep track of the kinds of questions that users ask, the numbers of materials added to the collection, the number of items that circulate, etc. These records will help you evaluate your library services and to make plans for another year. This will also help in the preparation of your reports to the sponsoring organization.

STEP 8: ARRANGE FOR CONTINUING EDUCATION (The Training)

1. PROVIDE AN ORIENTATION for new volunteers. Introduce them to the library, where things are located and, in general, the procedures. Acquaint them with your procedures manual mentioned above.

2. ASSIGN A BUDDY, a knowledgeable co-worker who knows the ropes, to work with the new recruit—if your staff is large enough. Let them work as a team until the new worker can make it on her/his own.

3. PLAN WORKSHOPS. Inquire first about what is available in the way of library workshops: write your denominational headquarters, inquire at your local Council of Churches, ask at the public library. Quite often a leadership training school sponsored by a council of churches will include a session on church libraries. Public libraries sometimes set up workshops for their own volunteers and are willing to let church/synagogue library volunteers attend. An alternative is to invite an experienced person to lead a training workshop tailored for just your staff.

4. ENCOURAGE ATTENDANCE AT LIBRARY CONFERENCES. The Church and Synagogue Library Association holds an annual conference at which training sessions are offered, led by nationally known persons in the congregational library field. National conferences also are held by other library associations. CSLA chapters hold regional and local workshops throughout the country.

STEP 9: PROVIDE FOR CONTINUITY (The Evaluation)

1. PREPARE REPORTS, at least annually. Measure how well you are doing in meeting objectives. Include numbers (totals, percentages and/or ratios) and examples of successful services.

2. PRESENT REPORTS TO YOUR SPONSORS, that is, anyone who provides funding or guidance. This tends to insure continued support. Also give copies to your minister or rabbi.

3. DRAW UP NEW PROGRAM PLANS for the coming year, using the annual report as a "survey of assets". (See steps 5 and 6). Establish new priorities and recommend new levels of effort for the coming year (with an estimate of the cost). This will be an annual cycle, repeated every year.

4. MAKE EVALUATION CONTINUOUS. Always know what is going on and where the library stands in regard to fulfilling the needs of the congregation. Be alert for unexpected developments that might call for a change—a turnover in library staff, a new study program in the congregation, or a surprise bequest of memorial funds.

5. BE ADAPTABLE. Don't be afraid to make changes. Adjust your program plans during the year when new situations or considerations call for a change in priorities or programs. Planning should be a continuous process.

6. RECORD all pertinent information in your permanent procedures manual.

STEP 10: STRETCH YOUR HORIZONS
(The Outreach)

1. INTERACT WITH THE NEIGHBORHOOD. Open your events, such as book reviews, to the public. Borrow collections of materials from the public library, perhaps for Vacation Church School. In return, offer to make your special collections available to their patrons—for reference in your library or interlibrary loan.

2. REACH OUT TO OTHER CONGREGATIONAL LIBRARIES. Join the Church and Synagogue Library Association and take part in a local chapter if there is one in your area. Read about other church and synagogue library activities in magazines such as *Church & Synagogue Libraries* (CSLA), *Lutheran Libraries* (Lutheran Church Library Association), and *Media; Library Services Journal* (Southern Baptist Convention Sunday School Board). Keep up with what's new.

3. LEARN FROM PROFESSIONAL LIBRARIANS. Programs used successfully in school or public libraries can be adapted for use in congregational libraries. By stretching your horizons you keep the library alive and growing. Visit other libraries. Ask your public librarian for magazines such as the *Wilson Library Bulletin* and the *School Library Journal.*

4. DARE TO DREAM. Big ideas come from God. Try to keep your mind and heart open to his will and be grateful for his help. When God is your partner, all you need is vision, enthusiasm and persistence. Believe wholeheartedly that wonderful things will happen—and they will!

RESOURCES

Many background materials are available from the Church and Synagogue Library Association, Box 1130, Bryn Mawr, PA 19010. See the list of guides and other publications inside the back cover. The library services committee of CSLA also publishes materials helpful to beginning librarians. Write for a list of these free or minimal cost publications at the CSLA address above.

Also, a list of basic congregational library manuals in print from other publishers is found on page 2.

CSLA GUIDE SERIES

CSLA Guide No. 1
SETTING UP A LIBRARY: HOW TO BEGIN OR BEGIN AGAIN, by Ruth S. Smith. 1979. 8p. Paperbound. ISBN 0-915324-16-4

CSLA Guide No. 2 (Rev. 2nd ed.)
PROMOTION PLANNING ALL YEAR 'ROUND, by Claudia Hannaford and Ruth S. Smith. 1978. 52p. Paperbound. ISBN 0-915324-09-1.

CSLA Guide No. 3 (Rev. ed.)
WORKSHOP PLANNING, by Ruth S. Smith. 1979. 65p. Paperbound. ISBN 0-915324-15-6.

CSLA Guide No. 4 (Rev. ed.)
SELECTING LIBRARY MATERIALS, by Arthur W. Swarthout. 1978. 10p. Paperbound. ISBN 0-915324-07-5.

CSLA Guide No. 5
CATALOGING BOOKS STEP BY STEP, by Ruth S. Smith. 1977. 22p. Paperbound. ISBN 0-915324-11-3.

CSLA Guide No. 6
STANDARDS FOR CHURCH AND SYNAGOGUE LIBRARIES. 1977. 20p. Paperbound. ISBN 0-915324-12-1.

CSLA Guide No. 7
CLASSIFYING CHURCH OR SYNAGOGUE LIBRARY MATERIALS, by Dorothy B. Kersten, 1977. 10p. Paperbound. ISBN 0-915324-13-X.

CSLA Guide No. 8
SUBJECT HEADINGS FOR CHURCH OR SYNAGOGUE LIBRARIES, by Dorothy B. Kersten, 1978. 22p. Paperbound. ISBN 0-915324-14-8.

OTHER CSLA PUBLICATIONS

CHURCH AND SYNAGOGUE LIBRARY RESOURCES 3rd ed. A CSLA bibliography, by Rachel Kohl and Dorothy Rodda. 1979. 16p. Paperbound. ISBN 0-915324-08-3.

HELPING CHILDREN THROUGH BOOKS: A SELECTED BOOKLIST. Rev. ed. A CSLA Bibliography, by Helen Keating Ott. 1979. 35p. Paperbound. ISBN 0-915324-06-7.

A BASIC BOOK LIST FOR CHURCH LIBRARIES. Rev. ed. A CSLA Bibliography, by Bernard E. Deitrick. 1979. 16p. Paperbound. ISBN 0-915324-10-5.

THE FAMILY USES THE LIBRARY. A CSLA Leaflet. 2nd ed. 1977. 4p.

THE TEACHER AND THE LIBRARY – PARTNERS IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION. A CSLA Leaflet. 1978. 4p.

For prices and quantity discounts on all publications, write:

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